

Benedict 2-Room School
CH-690
Benedict
Private

Circa 1886

Likely constructed during the last quarter of the 19th century, the Benedict 2-Room School is a one story frame structure with an overall L-plan. Situated at the entrance to the village of Benedict, the building's most unique feature is its exterior brick chimney. Facing northeast, the schoolhouse is sited on a small lot at the corner of Prince Frederick Road and Benedict Avenue. Consisting of two equally sized rectangular structures, the front-gable faces northwest and the wing extends to the southeast.

Although little historic material remains, the Benedict 2-Room School derives its significance as an example of the small handful of 2-room schoolhouses in use throughout Charles County in the early 20th centuries. Two-room schoolhouses were far less common than their 1-room counterparts. In 1918, there were 77 one-room schools in comparison to only nine 2-room structures.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-690

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Benedict 2-Room School
other

2. Location

street and number 18119 Prince Frederick Road not for publication
city, town Benedict vicinity
county Charles

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Patricia and Donzie Cook, Jr.
street and number 18119 Prince Frederick Road telephone Unknown
city, town Hughesville state MD zip code 20637-2511

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Charles County Courthouse tax map and parcel: 49 p. 12
city, town LaPlata liber 2129 folio 394

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
☐ Other

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	1 2 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	1 2 Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			1

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-690

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Likely constructed during the last quarter of 19th century, the Benedict 2-Room School is a one-story frame structure with an overall L-plan. Situated at the entrance to the village of Benedict, the building's most unique feature is its exterior brick chimney. Facing northeast, the schoolhouse is situated on a small lot at the corner of Prince Frederick Road and Benedict Avenue. Consisting of two equally sized rectangular structures, the front-gable faces northwest and the wing extends to the southeast. The historic landscape includes two large trees standing in the schoolyard. However, the site is shared with a later mid-20th century dwelling and an assortment of late 20th century material that largely detracts from the site's historic character.

Currently, the structure is sheathed with an asphalt shingle roof, and vinyl or aluminum siding over the original weatherboard siding. Exterior wall materials in particular consist of a range of materials haphazardly arranged to protect the structure from the elements. All windows have been replaced throughout with standard replacements poorly matched to the original fenestration. As visual evidence suggests, the original windows were clearly larger than the modern replacements. The foundation was not visible at the time of the survey.

The front elevation includes a single, centered door on the front gable and two windows found symmetrically placed on the wing. A second door is found on the southeast gable wall. The northwest wall includes three windows and the remaining exterior brick chimney, which now ends at the roof line. The rear elevation is obscured by a later shed addition.

The interior was not accessible at the time of the survey.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-690

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates	Circa 1886	Architect/Builder	Unknown
Construction dates	Circa 1886		

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register ☐ Maryland Register ☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Although little historic material remains, the Benedict 2-Room School derives its significance as an example of the handful of 2-room schoolhouses in use throughout Charles County in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Two-room schoolhouses were far less common than their 1-room counterparts as the dominant architecture of education before the second quarter of the 20th century. In 1918, there were 77 one-room schools in comparison to only nine 2-room buildings. Additionally, the schoolhouse may also be the oldest standing structure associated with the village of Benedict, which was destroyed by fire in the early 1900s.

Although the exact date of construction is unknown, a survey was made of the schoolhouse lot containing 1 acre in 1886. Despite limited architectural evidence, the overall style does not contradict such a date. The survey was completed by H. C. Page for John D. Bowling, who at the time owned virtually all of what is today the village of Benedict. This particular parcel was part of Lot No. 7 in the subdivision of John D. Bowling's estate. In 1927, the school was closed and the property was sold to Edward J. Edelen by the Board of Education, after which it was likely used as a dwelling until the present.

The period following the Civil War saw the greatest advances in a county-wide system of education. In 1867, there were thirty-six public schools located in Charles County. Five of these were log structures and the remaining thirty-one were frame buildings. By the following year, there were an additional six schools for African-American children in the county. Throughout the latter half of the 19th century, education in Charles County was mainly based on primary schools with one teacher located in one room schoolhouses. This pattern continued virtually unchanged until the 1920's when the advent of the automobile and the Equalization Fund Law of 1922 made consolidation both physically and economically viable.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-690

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 1

Acreage of historical setting 1

Quadrangle name Benedict

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Benedict 2-room School is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 49, Grid 13, Parcel 12.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Currey/Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Charles County Planning Dept.

date 4/1/01

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town LaPlata

state MD zip code 20646

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH- 690

Section 8 Page 1

Benedict 2-Room School
name of property
Charles County, MD
county and state

Chain of title:

October 18, 1927	Board of Education to Edward J. Edelen. Building and Improvementssame 1 acre surveyed by H. C. Page, September 17, 1886 Part of Lot No. 7. John D. Bowling estate. 49:590
February 5, 1941	Edward J. and Alma Edelen to Jerry P. Harrington of Washington D.C. 73:449
January 26, 1949	Jerry P. harrington to Harry A. and Pearl E. Shorter 88:50
May 6, 1964	To Charles W. and Agnes T. Gardiner 169:1
October 26, 1970	To George N. and Christa S. Walls 225:745
August 29, 1972	To Elizabeth K. Moffitt 261:645
January 27, 1989	To James Verghese 1360:582
August 22, 1995	To Donzie and Patricia Cook 2129:394

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No.CH-690

Section 9 Page 1

Benedict 2-Room School

name of property

Charles County, Maryland

county and state

Major Bibliographic References:

Brown, Jack D., et al. Charles County, Maryland, A History. Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, La Plata, Maryland.

Charles County Retired Teachers Association. A Legacy: One- and Two-Room Schools in Charles County. La Plata, MD: Dick Wildes Publishing Company, 1984.

Klapthor, Margaret Brown. The History of Charles County, Maryland. La Plata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.





